

California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley

Strategic Action Proposal

Health and Human Services Work Group

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Strategic Action Plan
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I. Vision Statement

The vision of the Health and Human Services Work Group is San Joaquin Valley residents will have the opportunity to enjoy a high quality of life as measured by timely access to necessary health care and social services, an environment that supports healthy lifestyles, and safe, nurturing communities that embrace the cultural diversity of the region.

II. Background

A. Scope Adopted by Partnership

- Identify and evaluate health care coverage and access in the San Joaquin Valley
- Identify health care workforce issues.
- Develop new strategies for health coverage targeted at regional residents.
- Work with regional partnerships to enhance outreach for the Healthy Kids programs and other children's health insurance incentives.
- Work with counties to develop regional plans to utilize Proposition 63 funds.
- Work with children's health organizations and education stakeholders to develop urban-rural partnerships on obesity prevention.

III. Goals & Objectives

A. Narrative

Overall Metrics: The broad, 10-year success measurements

- Enhanced access to primary care physicians, specialists and other allied health care professionals;
- Increased use of telemedicine;
- Improved primary health indicators (e.g. asthma rate, overweight/obesity, diabetes, and coronary heart disease);
- Decrease number of uninsured;
- Decreased drug related convictions;
- Decrease caseload for children and adults requiring welfare services.

1. Goal 1: Develop comprehensive education and training systems to meet the health care worker shortage in the region.

a. Objectives

- **Objective A: Establish a University of California (UC) Merced medical school within ten years.**

A medical education program is critical for addressing the provider shortage in the Valley. UC Merced is leading the effort to develop a medical education program in the Valley, with an emphasis on training providers who are culturally competent and are committed to serving the region's health needs.

- **Objective B: Establish the Central Valley Nursing Education Consortium.**

The Central Valley Nursing Education Consortium (Consortium) will serve as the organizing body that will develop and manage a regional strategy for addressing the region's nursing shortage. The Consortium and its partners will work to ensure training of additional nurses to care for the region's growing population and to meet the health care needs of medically underserved areas, while at the same time serving as a source for the rest of California.

2. Goal 2: Enhanced access to appropriate health care services and improved public health management.

a. Objectives

- **Objective A: Provide incentives for difficult to recruit health and medical professionals.**

Finding solutions to the health professional shortages will require both short-term efforts and longer time approaches. In the short term, the Valley needs to find new ways to attract and retain health professionals while making better use of existing professionals. In the longer run, the region needs to support and expand health care professional training efforts.

- **Objective B: Enhance public health management capabilities.**

The Valley needs to find new ways to attract and retain public health professionals. To this end, this recommendation focuses on developing a regional approach to staffing public health laboratories, sharing existing technical and professional resources, providing new opportunities to obtain additional training, and supporting local programming efforts targeted to secondary schools.

- **Objective C: Develop a regional plan to address the needs of the uninsured.**

Addressing the needs of the uninsured in the Valley will require a collaborative approach that brings together experts from academia, government, business, health care, labor, and other fields. The consensus plan will work to develop the framework for a comprehensive strategy that addresses the health care affordability and coverage challenges in the Valley.

- **Objective D: Improve delivery of health care services through the use of information technology infrastructure and services.**

Health information technology (HIT) infrastructure and services provide opportunities to improve the region's economic vitality and to enhance health care access. Building upon the Governor's initiative, this recommendation proposes future health IT investments in the Valley. Further, HIT provides opportunities to enhance health care access by improving coordination among health providers and using telemedicine.

3. Goal 3: Develop comprehensive methamphetamine education and treatment programs.

- **Objective A: Develop researched based treatment modalities designed to address methamphetamine and other drug addictions, with a focus on prevention and maintenance of recovery.**

The San Joaquin Valley region, like other areas of the state, is impacted by the criminal and social consequences of alcohol and substance abuse. However, the San Joaquin Valley is particularly affected by the production, sale, and abuse of methamphetamine. Treatment is effective when it is available and an increasing number of persons in the Valley are seeking recovery. This recommendation focuses on supporting community education and outreach efforts and increasing access to comprehensive substance abuse treatment services.

4. Goal 4: Support and promote pro-active foster care prevention services.

- **Objective A: Promote higher rates of relative placements.**

Since the enactment of the more stringent Relative Approval Process, Valley counties have experienced decreasing numbers of relative placements. To enhance relative placements, this recommendation focuses on developing a pilot program that may include a temporary approval process for emergency placement with family members and other factors.

- **Objective B: Support a stable and continuous preventive services program in the Valley.**

In recent years a wide number of research studies, prevention models, and system improvement demonstration projects have underscored the successes of foster care diversion programs. Counties have demonstrated decreasing foster care caseloads where prevention services are consistently available. This recommendation will work to implement pilot projects and identify resource supports that promote a stable and ongoing preventive services program in the region.

5. Goal 5: Consider alternative funding formulas in distributing new grant resources.

- **Objective A: Develop a mechanism to enhance review and consideration of funding new awards and grants.**

With regards to any new funding for counties, additional elements to funding awards and grants could be taken into consideration. In addition to current budgets and

population, considerations could include the applicant county's socioeconomic conditions, primary health care indicator data, and child welfare outcomes.

B. At-A-Glance Matrix

PLEASE PASTE EXCEL CHART.

III. Resources for Implementation

A. Existing Resources

There are opportunities to leverage existing resources and organizations to implement these recommendations. There are opportunities to build upon current state and local efforts and bring forward on a regional basis. Further, recent waivers allow for flexible use of existing funds.

B. Additional Resources

There will be a need for additional resources to fund recommendations of the Health and Human Services plan. Investments are necessary to pursue a variety of action steps including but not limited to launching planning efforts, developing community-specific informational materials, evaluating potential strategies, and establishing appropriate infrastructure.

IV. Status Report

- Goal 1: Develop comprehensive education and training systems to meet the healthcare worker shortage in the region.
 - UC Merced has completed Phase One of a multi-phase process to initiate medical education in the Valley. UC Merced officials have documented and demonstrated the need for the program, developed a regional model for medical education, consulted with UC Merced and UCSF Fresno faculty and Valley residents, and submitted a proposal to establish medical education to UC Office of the President. In addition, the Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency awarded UC Merced \$5 million in support of the university's efforts to conduct feasibility studies for establishing medical programs.
 - Thanks to a number of facilitated meetings led by the Hospital Council of Central and Northern California, there is already significant buy-in from the nurse educators in the region to partner to develop the Central Valley Nursing Education Consortium.